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**U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Resources
Washington, DC 20515**

July 2, 1998

Dear :

I am aware that some are seriously mischaracterizing both the substance and the intent behind the letter you recently joined me in sending to Governor Wilson and Secretary Babbitt on the CALFED process. The nature of these criticisms is substantially at variance with the specific recommendations and observations in our letter. I want you to be sure that you have accurate information concerning our letter.

It is not accurate to characterize our letter as promoting controversy, although there has been and doubtless will continue to be much controversy as CALFED moves into its final stages. There have been numerous disagreements throughout the public process, including at public meetings and at congressional and State Legislature hearings. By contrast, our letter opens by noting the ongoing support of the signers for the CALFED process, and we praise Gov. Wilson and Sec. Babbitt for their public support of non-structural alternatives that are the substance of our letter.

Far from reverting to traditional, intransigent positions, as some assert, our letter specifically notes support for a "staged approach" and concludes, "Like others in the state, we are prepared to put aside past positions and consider new approaches if we are convinced that the [CALFED] process has been fair and the conclusion represent the results of sound science, technological innovation, and credible financing arrangements."

Our letter specifically stressed the need to move beyond traditional resistance to sound water management by all sectors of the state. We emphasize the need for serious conservation, groundwater management, waste water reuse, and improved efficiency "in both the urban and agricultural communities" to maximize our current supplies and as a necessary precursor to justify additional facilities should they be required. Moreover, we recognize that "major improvements [in water use efficiency] have already occurred in both sectors."

Certainly, some may disagree with some of the recommendations raised in our letter: the need to address the ongoing drainage problem before taking actions that could worsen the situation; the need to develop a state-wide groundwater management plan before spending billions of dollars to build up our groundwater reserves; the need for beneficiaries of new facilities to pay their fair

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share rather than relying on substantial public subsidies. But these views have been frequently expressed throughout the CALFED process by environmentalists and non-environmentalists alike, as well as in Congress and the Legislature.

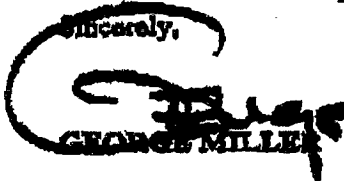
Similarly, it is not realistic to criticize signers of our letter for intruding into the CALFED process. Surely, all parties are aware that the draft Environmental Impact Statement on CALFED options is currently undergoing an extended review and comment period. Hearings and forums are being held throughout the state, in Congress, in the Legislature and elsewhere on the options contained in the DEIS. There is nothing inappropriate, divisive or improper about offering comments during a comment period. Such comments, in my view, do not constitute "outside political pressure," as some have characterized it, any more than do the comments of many other legislators and public officials who have, and continue, to comment on the details of the DEIS.

Not is it accurate to suggest that our comments could jeopardize funding for the CALFED program in Congress. While it is true that the funding has not been provided at the level requested by the Clinton Administration, those decisions were made prior to the release of our letter. Moreover, our letter restates our support for adequate funding for CALFED.

Our letter did not question the motives or sincerity of any group within the state with respect to its commitment to the CALFED process or to improved water management practices. Indeed, the only entities singled out for attention were those "public agencies" whose ability to implement CALFED will be questioned "if those same agencies have not successfully implemented more modest programs that are their legal responsibility."

Water always has, and always will be, a subject of intense discussion and controversy within California. We have offered our comments to CALFED in the spirit of moving towards a consensus that emphasizes environmentally and fiscally responsible water management, and maximizing the efficient use of water resources before embracing a major expansion of facilities. Not only is that a wholly justified approach, but it appears quite close to what Gov. Wilson and Sec. Babbitt embraced in Sacramento two weeks ago, and to what members of the State Legislature have written to endorse. I hope to continue to work cooperatively with you and others in the delegation and throughout the state on our continuing efforts to improve the reliability and quality of our state's water resources.

Sincerely,



GEORGE MILLER

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